



THE INTERPERSONAL MEANING OF ENGLISH POSTS WRITTEN BY ACEH BLOGGERS ON STEEMIT

Jumaida Fajar Nasriati¹

Zulfadli A. Aziz

Siti Sarah Fitriani

Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to analyze the interpersonal meaning of English posts published by Acehnese bloggers on social media-based blog, Steemit through the systemic functional linguistic analysis by Halliday (1985). Steemit is a blog community which has a function as social media. There were twenty posts that were sorted to be analyzed in this research. In sorting the posts, the researchers classified the posts that used topics or tags “Aceh”, “History”, “Writing”, “Tourism”, Education, “Writing”, “Nature”, “Life” and “Photography”. In analyzing the posts, there are three issues that have been the focus of the research; exchange of interaction type, mood type and attitude appraisal that are realized in the posts. There were two kinds of exchange of interaction, the exchange of giving information or good and service and demanding information or good and service. From this research, giving information was the most dominant exchange of interaction and there was a small number of demanding information found. Meanwhile, none of the interactions in terms of giving or demanding goods and service as the interaction exchange were found. Another focus is mood element structures of the clauses in the posts. Giving information was the highest number found which revealed that declarative was the most dominant mood type realized in the posts. In the posts, however, it was found that there was a small number of appraisal value. Overall, the three appraisal values were all presented in the whole posts. They were judgement, affect and appreciation. However, the three values also showed very small number.

Keywords: *Interpersonal Meaning, Exchange of Interaction, Mood.*

¹ Corresponding author: jumaydafajarn@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Transactions among humans commonly used language. When somebody desires a thing, he/she will express the will in language. Language is a tool to exchange the interaction. People are exchanging information and good or service for the transaction. So, whether spoken or written, the interaction among people happens by producing text. Therefore, the text takes role in delivering of what the writer or speaker means. Text delivers meanings to be received by the audience.

Nowadays people have a personal access into internet so that they can easily be exposed to texts as the first sources of information. Social media is now one of the tools to write and share texts as it has been easily and massively used around the world. Application ventures have been offered numerous instant applications to support this daily writing updates easily and instantly. Yet, people still easily interact and continuously keep in touch. Another media which facilitates writing works is blog. Blog has been launched way before other types of social media such as whatsapp, instagram, facebook, and so forth. The word blog comes from the word Website and Log. Blog has its specific function in sharing text such as, scientific articles, daily journal even personal stories. Writing on blog requires sort of coding writing text style which is not as stress-free as that on other social media. That is the reason why *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Whatsapp* and many more have been commonly used until now.

Ahn (2014) found that bloggers contributed in promoting tourism as they wrote about travelling journal through their personal blogs. Pictures and some information can disseminate the tourism values through bloggers' persuasive writings. Another study by Pal and Kapur (2010) found that it is not possible to invite international market with blog as presentation to facilitate online communication and other benefits from the internet. So, now whoever can take the benefit from the internet even some is very dependable on it such as e-banking transaction.

Writing on blog can now allow writers to earn from their writing works which makes it different from writing on other types of social media. A platform called *Steemit* has offered an interesting experience of writing on blog through the combination of blog and another type of social media. The platform is trying to facilitate people who love to write and has but has an opportunity to get profit from their works. This idea has highly motivated blog writers to keep on sharing their writing works because the platform allows them to earn.

Blog authors on *Steemit* come from around the world. They are from countries such as US, Canada, England, Germany, Spain, Netherland, Turkey, and even from Asia such as Japan, South Korea, China, Singapore, India, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and some countries in Africa. Since it is a social media it allows users or blog writers to interact each other within the platform. Users' writing works are various based on what concerns or interests them. English is a key for a mutual interaction in international level. It helps to bridge up the communication gap among users in giving feedback or inputs as a work reflection. Thus, writing in English is also a mutual way to share articles, thoughts, opinions or stories as the writing works on the platform.

These users which come from different language backgrounds have shared something in common when they share in English as a language of choice in delivering their posts on the blog. However, even though English is a massively used language in the world, when it is spoken by non-English speakers, the meaning will be a concern.

Using English texts as an interaction exchange will be accomplished when both writers and readers have an aligned understanding. The way non-English speakers express their ideas and thoughts in English texts will be much influenced by their different backgrounds. Somehow it leads readers into a bias meaning. Readers can literally understand what writers mean by looking up on what speech functions are used by writers in texts because language has interpersonal functions which deliver interpersonal meanings (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, Yallop, 2000). Therefore, finding out interpersonal meanings of writers is another way to understand what writers can actually mean.

Interpersonal meaning which is one of the concerns in systemic functional linguistics (SFL) was developed by Michael Halliday. SFL is used to analyze the social interaction within a particular social and cultural context. The application of SFL is to understand the meaning that is presented in text because language is used to interpret the meaning.

There are several previous studies that already analyzed the interpersonal meaning in texts such as the one done by Feng and Liu (2010) entitled *Interpersonal Meaning in Public Speeches: A Case Study in Obama's*. This research found that Obama dominantly took role as the information processor in delivering his speech realized in declarative mood. Rahma (2012) conducted the analysis of interpersonal meaning entitled *Teacher's Scaffolding Talks* and found that during a teaching learning process, produced text is realized in three types of mood:

declarative, interrogative and imperative. The last study was *The Interpersonal Meaning in Movie Subtitle "Freedom Writers"* by Mughibbah (2016) and her findings also consisted of the three types of mood in such movie subtitle. Based on the previous studies, the researchers intended to conduct the research to find the interpersonal meaning in English written posts by Acehese bloggers to further seek an understanding of the Acehese English text writing phenomena on Steemit.

Based on the phenomenon above, there are three focuses in this study. Firstly, the researchers identified the exchange of interaction realized in steemit posts. Secondly, the researchers analyzed the mood type of the text. Thirdly, the researchers concerned with the attitude appraisal included in steemit texts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a study of language through its function. There are four strata in language system; context, meaning (semantic), sound (phonology) and lexicogrammar (syntax, relationship morphology, lexis). The application of the SFL is to understand the quality of texts as what it means and it is valued (Halliday, 1985).

To accomplish an interaction people are producing texts. Texts are not only a unit of language but also a unit of meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). To understand the meaning of texts we need to understand what speakers or writers exchange in the interaction. We can see the language through the system of the function.

Table 1. Speech Function

	Commodity	
Roles	Information	Goods & Services
Giving	Statement	Offer
Demanding	Question	Command

The meaning of the speech must be realized by its function. From a speech analysis the audience can understand the interaction between the speaker or the writer.

Mood system

The exchange in an interaction has a reflective relationship with mood. Mood is what can be realized as the meaning of the speech. There are three types of mood.

Table 2. Speech Function Realized in Mood

Speech Function	Mood
Statement →	Declarative
Question →	Interrogative
Command →	Imperative
Offer →	-

Mood defines the semantic function of a clause as the transaction within interaction. The mood element is found in functional grammar. Systemic functional grammar is intended to analyze any kind of texts, whether it is spoken or written in modern English. Halliday and Hassan (1976) has agreed that the word text in linguistics refers to any kind of texts whether spoken, even poem or play. Mood consists of the subject and the finite operator. The subject is a nominal group while the finite operator is part of a verbal group. The explanation of subject and finite operator can be seen in the example as follow:

The elements that create mood in structure are: subject and finite. Finite is a verbal group that consists of one or more than two words. Subject is the nominal group that has the closest relationship with finite. The combination of these two elements is called mood or mood block. The example as follows:

She	goes
Subject	Finite
Mood	Element

The approaches of grammar of interaction come from semantic perspective. Halliday points out that whenever we use language to interact, one of the things we are doing with it is establishing a relationship between us: between the person speaking now and the person who will probably speak next (Halliday, 1985). The mood structure of the clauses refers to the organization of asset of functional constituents including the constituent subject. The component that gets bandied back and forth is what is called as the Mood element of the clause. There are two essential functional constituents of the Mood component of the clause: the subject and the finite.

The subject offered by Halliday (1985) is that it realizes the thing by reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied. It provides the person or thing in whom success or failure of the proposition is. In the other words, subject refers to what is “held responsible”. The second constituent of mood element is the finite. Halliday (1985) defines the finite in terms of its function in the clause to make the proposition definite and to anchor the proposition in a way that people can argue about.

The other component is called as the residue. Residue consists of Predicator, complement and Adjunct. The complement is typically realized by nominal groups, while the predicator is realized by the non-tensed (or nonfinite) element or elements of the verbal group. Moreover, the adjunct is realized by an adverbial group or prepositional phrase. Adjuncts have some sub types as well namely circumstantial, mood, polarity, comment, vocative, conjunctive and continuity.

In giving or demanding information, there are three types of mood in use. The first is declarative mood. It is to understand the meaning of what speakers or writers say. Subject and finite can be the only elements within clause that create mood. However, there are other elements that generally followed with mood block, they are; predicator, adjunct, and complement. These three elements are called residue in a mood clause. The example of mood element structure analysis is illustrated below:

Declarative mood: Demanding information

<i>In the final scene</i>		<i>Euripides</i>	<i>displays</i>		<i>this</i>
Adjunct	Subject	Finite + (present)	Predicator	Complement	
Res	Mood	Block	- idue		

Declarative mood of demanding information is a mood type that demands the audience to fulfill of what speakers or writers require. Hearers or readers are supposed to fulfil speakers or writers’ intention of the text.

Declarative mood: Giving information

Never had she seen such power (invested in a woman)

Mood Adjunct	Finite	Subject	Predicator	Complement
Res	Mood	-idue		

Declarative mood of giving information is a mood type in giving a declaration or statement as the commodity during interaction. The emphasis in this mood is serving a fact. It is aimed at the audience to receive the information delivered by speakers or writers.

Interrogative mood: Asking information

Who has taken my pen?

Wh- Subject	Finite	Predicator	Compliment
Mood	Block	Residue	

Interrogative mood asking information is a mood questioning an information. Speakers or writers are asking a reaction; therefore, hearers or readers are supposed to response after receiving this mood.

Interrogative mood: Giving good and services

Shall I make the tea?

Finite	Subject	Predicator	Complement
Block		Residue	

Good and service belongs to commodity in speech function. The interaction that happens with this mood leads to a response in serving a new reaction. The reaction could be material or service.

Imperative mood: Demanding goods and services

*Play
squash!*

No Subject	No Finite	Predicator	Complement
Mood	Block	Residue	

*Do
squash!* *play*

No Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement
Mood	Block	Residue	

*You
squash!* *play*

Subject	No Finite	Predicator	Complement
Mood	Block	Residue	

Imperative mood of demanding goods and service is a mood that definitely requires hearers or readers to react. Hearers or readers are supposed to fulfil speakers or readers to accomplish a mission.

Based on the examples above, the meaning of speakers or writers' texts can be realized by listeners or readers through clause analysis. We can see speakers or writers are exchanging information and goods and services in texts that are realized by listeners or readers within the interaction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method of this research was descriptive qualitative which focuses on description analysis and interpretation. Meanwhile, the data was analyzed by means of content analysis. The subject in this research was the English blog posts and the object of this research is the interpersonal meaning within the posts. The researchers gained the data from social media-based blog platform, Steemit. To figure out the meaning of writer posts, the researchers classified the posts by topic (tag) such as Aceh, history, education, tourism, nature, writing, story, life and photography. The instrument of this research was documentation. The posts as the data were documented and compiled for a further analysis. by using Halliday theory on SFL focusing on speech function analysis, mood element structure analysis and attitude appraisal analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As many as 20 English written posts were analyzed by the researchers. From the result of the research, it was found that the dominant exchange of interaction in Aceh English written posts were giving information. The Acehnese blog authors mostly provided statement in their texts to exchange information. The clause analysis in identifying the structure was based on the result findings. From the finding of the type of the exchange of interaction by the Acehnese blog authors, it was found that giving information is the most dominant exchange in the texts. The texts showed that the typical writing styles of the Acehnese were still leaning to their first language. There were also significant grammatical errors and word order issues in the texts. From the total clauses, statement had the highest number as many as 248 from 254 clauses, followed by commands (5 cases) and question (1 case). It shows that the Acehnese blog authors positioned themselves as text producers. That means that the authors require readers to receive the information in purpose to accomplish the interaction. Thus, all the authors have fulfilled the basic function of interaction. No matter how the formal grammar structure was being disorderly arranged, the meaning could still be understood by encoding the functional structure of the text. This is relevant to what Halliday's (1985) theory that language should be viewed by its function context to understand the meaning. Halliday and Hasan (1976) defined text as a unit of language in use not as grammatical unit but a unit of meaning. The dominant exchange of the interaction was statement which is giving information (97,6 %).

From the exchange of interaction, the texts also consisted of found the mood type. The mood elements that existed in the clause structure were: mood (subject+finite) and residue (predicator, complement, adjunct). In an interaction, declarative is indicated as giving information. Therefore, when the blog authors in this study gave statement, they formed declarative clause and 248 declarative clauses were recorded in this study Imperative mood is used to demand information or goods and services and this mood occurred 5 times in this study. In imperative structure, the clause does not require mood (subject+finite) as it can stand alone by a predicator. From the texts there were five imperative mood clauses realized through commands. The last mood type is interrogative. The interrogative mood is used by authors to demand information or

goods and service. This mood is derived from question. This study recorded only one interrogative mood conveyed through question.

The attitude appraisals were rarely found in the all texts. From all clauses, there were only 11 clauses classified as attitude appraisals. The Acehnese blog authors expressed less attitude appraisals in their texts. Appraisal is defined as how speakers or writers position their audience (Butt et al, 2000). Thus, the appraisals are supposed to influence the reaction of readers in three categories: judgement, affect and appreciation. In this study, judgment occurred 6 times, whereas there were 5 affects and there was only one appreciation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the posts written Aceh bloggers on Steemit social media-based blog, the texts in this context means the posts that result in the exchange of interaction between blog authors and readers. There were two kinds of exchange of interaction, giving information or good and service and demanding information and good or service. In this study, the most dominant type of interaction exchange employed in the blog was giving information. Meanwhile demanding information and good or service was hardly found within the text.

There were three kinds of mood element analysis, declarative, interrogative and imperative mood. Among three types of mood, declarative was the most commonly found in the English written blog posts by the Acehnese bloggers, whereas imperative mood had smaller number uses. However, interrogative clause was almost not identified from the entire posts or texts.

There were three types in expressing appraisal; judgement, affect and appreciation. Overall, the three types of appraisal were hardly found in all posts. However, among these three types, judgment had the highest number occurrence from the clause findings. English written posts were complex in clause arrangement in the texts. The researchers found that the complexity of the clause written by Acehnese blog authors were influenced by authors' first language. The topics preferred to write by the authors were persuasive texts whether to describe their photo or promote local tourism destinations. The rest texts pertained to some serious topics such as history, education and opinion.

REFERENCES

- Ahn, N. (2014) *Blog Marketing in Tourism, Case Study: Outdoor Finland for Bloggers 2014*. Published (Bachelor Thesis) Lahti University of Applied Science: Amsterdam.
- Butt, D., Fahey, R., Feez, S., Spinks, S., Yallop, C. (2000). *Using Functional Grammar*. National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research: Macquarie University.
- Feng, H. & Liu, Y. (2010). Analysis of Interpersonal Meaning in Public Speeches-A Case Study of Obama's Speech. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(6), 825-829.
- Halliday, M., & Hasan, R. (1976) *Cohesion in English*. New York: Pearson Education Ltd
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *Spoken and Written Language*. Melbourne: Deakin University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Mathiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*. New York: Routledge.
- Mughibbah, L. (2016) *The Analysis of Interpersonal Meaning In "Freedom Writers" Movie Subtitle*. Published (Undergraduate Thesis). Syech Nurjati State Islamic Institute. Cirebon.
- Pal, K. S. & Kapur, V. (2010) Blog Marketing Strategy for Mature and Emerging Market. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 1(4), 412-423.
- Rahma, Y. (2012). An Analysis of Interpersonal Meaning on Teacher's Scaffolding Talks. *Ecounter*, 3(2), 56-68.